

**BEFORE THE TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION**

IN RE: Robert Carlton Jarrett )  
Map 018-00-0, Parcel 42.00 ) Davidson County  
Residential Property )  
Tax Year 2005 )

### INITIAL DECISION AND ORDER

### Statement of the Case

The subject property is presently valued as follows:

<u>LAND VALUE</u>	<u>IMPROVEMENT VALUE</u>	<u>TOTAL VALUE</u>	<u>ASSESSMENT</u>
\$30,000	\$112,800	\$142,800	\$35,700

An appeal has been filed on behalf of the property owners with the State Board of Equalization.

This matter was reviewed by the undersigned administrative law judge pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated, §§ 67-5-1412, 67-5-1501 and 67-5-1505. A jurisdictional hearing was conducted on April 21, 2006 at the Davidson County Property Assessor's Office. Present at the hearing were Ronda L. Jarrett, the appellant, and Davidson County Property Assessor's representative, Jason Poling.

## FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Subject property consists of a single family residence located at 330 Moncrief in Goodlettsville, Tennessee.

The initial issue is whether or not the State Board of Equalization has the jurisdiction to hear the taxpayer's appeal. The law in Tennessee generally requires a taxpayer to appeal an assessment to the County Board of Equalization prior to appealing to the State Board of Equalization. Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 67-5-1401 & 67-5-1412(b). A direct appeal to the State Board of Equalization is only permitted if the assessor does not timely notify the taxpayer of a change of assessment prior to the meeting of the County Board. Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 67-5-508(b)(2) & 67-5-1412(e). Nevertheless, the legislature has also provided that:

The taxpayer shall have **a right to a hearing and determination to show reasonable cause** for the taxpayer's failure to file an appeal as provided in this section and, upon demonstrating such reasonable cause, the [state] board shall accept such appeal from the taxpayer up to March 1<sup>st</sup> of the year subsequent to the year in which the assessment is made (*emphasis added*).

In analyzing and reviewing Tenn. Code Ann. § 67-5-1412(e), the Assessment Appeals Commission, in interpreting this section, has held that:



The deadlines and requirements for appeal are clearly set out in the law, and owners of property are charged with knowledge of them. It was not the intent of 'reasonable cause' provisions to waive these requirements except **where the failure to meet them is due to illness or other circumstances beyond the taxpayer's control.** (*emphasis added.*) *Associated Pipeline Contractors Inc.* (Williamson County, Tax Year 1992, Assessment Appeals Commission, Aug. 11, 1994). See also *John Orovets*, (Cheatham County, Tax Year 1991, Assessment Appeals Commission, Dec. 3, 1993).

Thus, for the State Board of Equalization to have jurisdiction to this appeal, the taxpayer must show that circumstances beyond her control prevented her from appealing to the Davidson County Board of Equalization. It is the taxpayer's burden to prove that they are entitled to the requested relief.

The taxpayer, Ms. Jarrett, stated that she misread the Informal Review and thought it was the Metropolitan Board of Equalization. Ms. Jarrett did acknowledge that she received the Notice of Appraised Value, Classification and Assessment (exhibit #1).

The taxpayer filed the appeal with the State Board of Equalization on August 5, 2005. The Metropolitan Board of Equalization for Davidson County began hearing cases on June 1, 2005, with the last date to schedule appointments for hearings being June 17, 2005. This information is clearly contained in the above identified document. Further, the document clearly states in bold letters:

**Failure to appeal to the Metropolitan Board of Equalization may result in the assessment becoming final without further right of appeal.**

The explanation does not justify a finding of "reasonable cause". The taxpayer has failed to carry the burden to establish a finding of reasonable cause, unfortunately, her explanation does not satisfy the statutory or case law findings.

#### ORDER

In the absence of proof of "reasonable cause" the administrative judge finds that the taxpayer has failed to sustain her burden and, therefore, the State Board of Equalization lacks jurisdiction to hear this appeal.

Pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 4-5-301—325, Tenn. Code Ann. § 67-5-1501, and the Rules of Contested Case Procedure of the State Board of Equalization, the parties are advised of the following remedies:

1. A party may appeal this decision and order to the Assessment Appeals Commission pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 67-5-1501 and Rule 0600-1-.12 of the Contested Case Procedures of the State Board of Equalization. Tennessee Code Annotated § 67-5-1501(c) provides that an appeal "**must be filed within thirty (30) days from the date the initial decision is sent.**" Rule 0600-1-.12 of the Contested Case Procedures of the State Board of

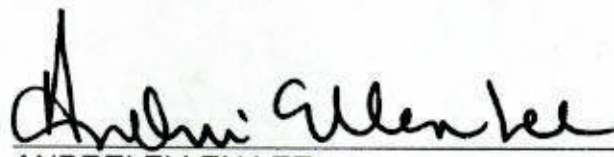


Equalization provides that the appeal be filed with the Executive Secretary of the State Board and that the appeal **"identify the allegedly erroneous finding(s) of fact and/or conclusion(s) of law in the initial order"**; or

2. A party may petition for reconsideration of this decision and order pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 4-5-317 within fifteen (15) days of the entry of the order. The petition for reconsideration must state the specific grounds upon which relief is requested. The filing of a petition for reconsideration is not a prerequisite for seeking administrative or judicial review; or
3. A party may petition for a stay of effectiveness of this decision and order pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 4-5-316 within seven (7) days of the entry of the order.

This order does not become final until an official certificate is issued by the Assessment Appeals Commission. Official certificates are normally issued seventy-five (75) days after the entry of the initial decision and order if no party has appealed.

ENTERED this 17<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2006.

  
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ANDREI ELLEN LEE  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE  
TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES DIVISION

c: Ms. Ronda Lee Jarrett  
Jo Ann North, Assessor of Property